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Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7479th meeting
Tuesday, 30 June 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mrs. Alingue
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Fernández-Arias Minuesa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I will now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Malaysia.

In convening today's wrap-up session, Malaysia is seeking to introduce some new elements that could inject added value into our exchanges — namely, reflections on the Council's work over a slightly longer time frame, both looking back and looking ahead. That said, I intend first to highlight certain key aspects of Malaysia's presidency of the Council this month.

During its presidency, Malaysia has sought to focus on three key issues: peacekeeping, peacebuilding and children and armed conflict. In pursuing these priorities, Malaysia is grateful for the strong and constructive support and cooperation extended by all Council members throughout the month.

With regard to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, the principal idea was to initiate preliminary discussions by the Council, taking into account its expected role in following up on the ongoing review processes of peace operations, the peacebuilding architecture and resolution 1325 (2000).

On children and armed conflict, taking into account the alarming upward trend in the employment of abduction as a tactic in violent conflicts, especially by terrorist groups and their affiliates, Malaysia has sought to further strengthen international protection norms for children in armed conflict, in particular by including abduction as an additional trigger for listing in the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict. As Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, we are grateful for the overwhelming support demonstrated by Council members and United Nations Member States during the open debate held on 18 June (see S/PV.7466) and for resolution 2225 (2015).

By way of statistics, the Council has held a total of 26 meetings, out of which 22 were public. Additionally, three Arria Formula meetings have been held in June concerning the situations in Darfur, Syria and — just this morning — on climate change and its implications for international peace and security, reflecting, in our view, healthy use of other meeting formats by Council members. With regard to outcomes in June, the Council has adopted a total of 22 products, including 6 resolutions and 2 presidential statements, and issued 15 press statements. It is disconcerting that a large number of the press statements have been in relation to terrorist attacks.

Today marks six months since Malaysia joined the Council. In our view, the Council's work in 2015 has thus far been largely positive. For example, a number of important norm-setting initiatives on the protection of civilians in armed conflict — including journalists, women, girls and children — were adopted between January and June. However, over the same period the Council has also seen a deterioration in a number of situations, most notably in Burundi, the Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. At the same time, the Council has also proven its dynamism in rising to new challenges, as demonstrated by its engagement on the issue of migrants at sea, both in the Mediterranean and in South-East Asian waters.

As stated earlier, the challenge to international peace and security posed by the twin scourges of terrorism and violent extremism has continued to loom large on the Council's agenda. Malaysia believes that, over the past six months, the Council has demonstrated a strengthened resolve to tackle and address these scourges, and particularly the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, including through follow-up decisions and initiatives. In that connection, we welcome the initiative of Lithuania and Spain to organize the extraordinary meeting of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), scheduled to be held in Madrid next month.

Just last Friday, the United Nations commemorated its seventieth anniversary. Since its inception, the United Nations and the Security Council have been at the forefront in maintaining international order, peace and stability. There have been numerous successes in that regard. However, there also remain a number of seemingly intractable challenges that continue to impinge on the credibility of the Council and the United Nations as a whole.

The top of that list must include Palestine, which has been in conflict and crisis for almost as long as the United Nations has been in existence. On this, we

believe, the Council has been ineffective for far too long. We reiterate that it is neither tenable nor acceptable for Palestine to remain in the status quo. The systematic decimation and subjugation of an entire people are an affront to everything which the United Nations and the Council stand for. It is time for all parties to recommit to peaceful negotiations, including on final status issues, and for the Council to step up to its responsibility in facilitating a peaceful political resolution to the long-standing conflict.

Against the backdrop of raging conflicts in the Middle East, including in Syria, Yemen and, to a lesser extent, Iraq, as well as the conflicts in Africa, particularly in Mali and Libya — exacerbated by the activities of groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Al-Nusra Front, Boko Haram and Al-Qaida, among others — Malaysia believes that there is an increasing need for the Council to take a more strategic approach, including by looking at the future implications of such conflicts at the regional and global levels. Without being prescriptive, the following issues lie ahead, on which, in our view, the Council should have initial conversations or discussion.

First are the implications for regional and subregional security and stability, for example in the Middle East, in view of the significant stresses on the countries of the region forced to cope with refugees and displaced persons fleeing the conflict in Syria. Similarly, the possible future implications of the various conflicts in Africa include the security implications of massive movements of those fleeing such conflicts, including through North Africa. While noting that the United Nations does have regional-level conflict-prevention capacities — for example, through the United Nations Office for West Africa and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia — no comparable capacity exists for the Middle East, which could arguably benefit from such a mechanism.

As highlighted during the recent meeting of the Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, the possibility of election-related violence flaring up and rapidly deteriorating into possible threats to international peace and security must also be on our radar, as must the need to work with the General Assembly in moving forward on the issue of selecting the next Secretary-General. In that regard, we note the proposals that have been put forward on this issue, and look forward to discussing them further with Council members and interested partners and stakeholders.

In concluding, Malaysia reaffirms its support for meetings such as this, which provide the necessary space for continuing a regular collective assessment of the Council's performance, as well as the opportunity for us to cast an eye on the challenges and opportunities that lie on the horizon in our collective endeavour of maintaining international peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the other members of the Council.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking you, Sir, and your team for your hard work this month, and for your invitation to hold this wrap-up session, which is a very welcome initiative. As your statistics made clear, it has been a productive month in terms of products, but it has also been a challenging one when we consider the increased threats to peace and security around the world.

I look forward in particular to hearing the reflections of other recently elected members of the Council, but as I am personally a new arrival, I thought that I would take this opportunity to offer my thoughts on the work of the Council on the basis of my first two months here. I want to share my impressions on three issues: working methods, the importance of Council unity, and the challenges ahead.

On working methods, in my first couple of months here I have been struck by how formal our interactions can be, whatever the format, including in Arria Formula meetings, in so-called informal consultations and even in so-called informal interative dialogues. In all these forums, I want to ask everyone what we can do to be more responsive and more interactive with each other and with those briefing us.

This month, for instance, we met a very broad range of leaders, activists and specialists working in Somalia, Syria, the Sudan. We welcomed the Force Commanders to the Council. All of these individuals bring insights that are invaluable for our work. But the formality of our interactions with them can sometimes limit our ability to draw effectively on their experience.

And I think particularly when we are meeting in private, we need to break away from the predictable pattern of reading prepared statements out loud, and

instead, properly engage with each other and briefers. Maybe even — shock horror — on a first-name basis that reflects our familiar and daily interactions. We should ask questions; we should interject. A dialogue should be an exchange, not a broadcast of views. If we do all agree on a point, then why does everyone need to say it? Why do not we just say that we agree with someone else and move on? Otherwise we end up reading out talking points that have already been made by other people. I know that others around the Council, and beyond, share this view, and both the peace operations review and the Office of Internal Oversight Services recommend that we have more open and honest conversations. So to do so, I believe we need to begin by looking again at our working methods and making them more engaging and interactive.

For my second reflection, I have been struck by how the Council can make real progress when there is unity. And we have seen such unity on counter-terrorism and on the fight against Ebola. We are also seeing it on some of the hardest issues we face, such as Yemen and Libya. But as events in Ukraine and Syria have demonstrated, when the Council is divided, our response falters and people suffer. As we look ahead to the next six months, we need to redouble our efforts to find common cause on those issues too.

And there are areas where we can agree, even on the most divisive issues like Syria. Through the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/523, annex) we were able to agree that a transitional governing body is needed — one that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people. A strong, stable, inclusive Government in Syria is the only way to counter the threat posed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant; the Al-Assad regime has neither the legitimacy nor the ability to do so. And the moderate opposition cannot do so alone. So whatever our national starting point in that conflict, we must all come together to help Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura in his efforts to bring about a political settlement, which is the only way to find an end to that awful conflict. So if we can make an extra effort to seek out common ground, if we can adopt some slightly more engaging working practices, maybe we will have a little bit more success in addressing the challenges ahead.

And that is my final reflection. It is on the scale of the challenges which the Council and the United Nations, as a whole, will face in the coming months. The President set out a long list — Middle East, migration, conflicts in Africa — and one could add climate change, conflict prevention, achieving the sustainable development goals. It is clear that we have a lot to do. But in addition to all of those, I want to focus on two further issues of particular importance to the United Kingdom: the selection of the next Secretary-General and the review of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

As I announced on my first day in April, the United Kingdom wants to see a more transparent, structured and inclusive selection process for the next Secretary-General. That means encouraging the broadest selection of credible candidates — men and particularly women — and setting a clear timeline for appointment. And it is the Council that must take the lead in this process, as it is the Council that has been mandated in the Charter of the United Nations to make the recommendation to the General Assembly.

I think we need to accelerate our work on that, but also think about how we can broaden out and give all States Members of the United Nations and civil society an opportunity to assess the candidates' credentials. If all qualifications are equal, the United Kingdom believes that it is high time for a woman to lead the United Nations. Twenty years on from the Beijing Declaration, it is time for the United Nations to show leadership and embody the practices it encourages all of its Members to follow.

Which brings me also to women, peace and security. There has been too little implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the 15 years since it was adopted. The United Kingdom sees the high-level review on women, peace and security in October as a chance to begin a new phase for this agenda; one focused on implementation and results for women affected by conflict. We want to see women at peace talks and real protection for the most vulnerable. Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi will be leading the Council when we consider the issue in October, and I look forward to working closely with him and the Spanish mission, and with all Council members, to further the agenda.

Finally, let me close by welcoming that the Council is holding this meeting in public. It is a pity that it is the first wrap-up meeting since the French presidency in March. These open sessions are important. And like the working practices I have described, they can bring greater transparency and greater engagement into our discussions and our decisions.

Mr. Baublys (Lithuania): I agree with my colleague. But I will add to his words. I wish to express, first of all, my delegation's appreciation to you personally, Mr. President, and to the Malaysian team for your efficient conduct of the Council presidency during the month. My delegation appreciates the diligent manner in which the presidency has acted in reacting to emergencies and efficiently conducting consultations. We also thank the presidency for the very timely open debate on children and armed conflict (see S/PV.7466), and for shepherding the adoption of resolution 2225 (2015), focusing on the recruitment and abduction of children.

Looking back at the agenda of the Council in June, I wish to share some thoughts on the working methods and key developments in the Council's discharge of its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations. The Council has been consistently opening more doors. Hardly has there been a day in June when the Council has not met in public. Only a few of the briefings by the Secretariat were in consultations, while the majority were delivered in the Chamber.

We are happy to note and to encourage the progress made in the delivering of briefings by the Secretariat. Such briefings should not duplicate the contents of the reports of the Secretary-General. As the Council is always pressed for time in consultations, we expect briefers to be succinct and to focus on critical issues. I believe that during this month, the Council wrote a letter to the Secretariat in that regard.

Speaking of format, it was unfortunate that at the joint briefing of the three subsidiary bodies dealing with counter-terrorism on 16 June (see S/PV.7463), the Council deviated from its existing practice, as non-Council members were not granted the right to participate in the discussions pursuant to rule 37. Such meetings provide a rare opportunity for the broader membership to share ideas and concerns with the Council regarding the global threats of terrorism and non-proliferation and ways to address them in working together with the subsidiary bodies.

We are also concerned that, due to the protracted process of the selection of a new Ombudsperson to the Al-Qaida sanctions regime, a gap may occur between the terms of the incumbent and the new Ombudsperson. Such a scenario would be not only contrary to the Council's decisions, but would also undermine the credibility of the Al-Qaida sanctions regime. We expect the Secretariat to take all necessary steps to ensure a smooth and orderly transition beyond 13 July, including the further extension of Ms. Prost's contract, if necessary.

This month the Council held a very useful briefing with United Nations Force Commanders (see S/PV.7464). I thank Malaysia for organizing that. Further efforts should be made to allow Force Commanders to engage more frequently in such interactive dialogue, while Council members should focus on questions rather than on statements, because on that particular occasion this month, 70 per cent of the time was taken up by Council members, while we listened to the briefers only 30 per cent of the time. In the months ahead we look forward to further discussions on the review of peacekeeping operations.

I wish also to commend the work of the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD) for the prompt, professional and high quality service that it has provided to Council members consistently, against the background of jam-packed and tight monthly programmes of work. The monthly statistics on Security Council activities hardly capture the full scope of the work. Numerous interactive dialogue and Arria Formula meetings — there was mention of three such meetings this month — and many more substantive other matters compete with consultations and briefings. May I suggest to SCAD that the monthly statistics as of now should reflect also the number of interactive dialogue meetings held and substantive other matters addressed in consultations.

Many situations on the ground call for consistent attention from the international community. I would like to focus on only three of those that were addressed by the Council this month: Burundi, Syria and Ukraine.

The Arria Formula meeting on barrel bombs once again reminded us about the plight of thousands of civilians in Syria under constant attack by their own Government without a glimmer of hope in sight. While only a political solution of the crisis can occur in Syria, the cruel, senseless and indiscriminate bombing of civilians must stop immediately. The Council can and must act.

The situation in Burundi has preoccupied the Council in June. The first round of elections was held yesterday against the advice of the African Union, the East African Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the United Nations to *postpone them*. Some 10,000 Burundians voted over

the weekend with their feet as they fled the country. The Council has to remain vigilant in order prevent the worst happening in the country.

As we follow the steady erosion of the ceasefire regime by the actions of the regular Russian troops and illegal armed groups in the Donbas very closely and with great concern, we are worried that Russia wants to strip itself of responsibility, and that it is not facilitating the work of the Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups. In June, the Council held an urgency meeting (S/PV.7457) to react to major breaches of the Minsk agreements and resolution 2202 (2015) in Marinka and Krasnogorivka by the Russia-backed militants. We have to remain vigilant as militants have now amassed substantial troops, tanks and heavy weapons on the contact line. The situation there is very, very fragile.

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has consistently flagged, for a number of months in a row, reports of sophisticated heavy weaponry and fighters being supplied from the Russian Federation. We look forward to hearing Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović address the Council on the human rights situation in occupied Crimea and certain parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. A genuine and inclusive political dialogue will remain impossible while the fighting continues and the terms of the truce are neglected. The Minsk agreements establish a clear sequence of necessary actions.

Finally, we welcome the letter sent to you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, containing proposals related to the forthcoming appointment of the next Secretary-General. We believe that the group's call to initiate the discussions at the Council regarding those proposals is timely and should be taken in consideration.

Let me conclude by wishing best success to the ambassador of New Zealand for the country's upcoming presidency in the month of July. New Zealand may count on our support.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): At the outset, we would like to congratulate the delegation of Malaysia on its presidency of the Security Council during the month of June, and to thank it for convening this meeting. We must acknowledge the heavy work load in the Council's agenda, which sometimes puts unbearable pressure on small delegations, as is the case of our own. The situation does not pertain specifically to the Malaysian presidency. In fact, the heavy workload is a structural feature of Security Council work matters. Additionally, the Council is faced by increasing conflict situations around the world which are imposing very heavy work schedules upon it.

In terms of work for the month of June, African and the Middle East issues were central in the Security Council discussions and deliberations. On the African issues, we had the occasion to hold a dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Region, Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily. Mr. Bathily was candid in pointing out the very worrying situation in the region, and above all, the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army, its criminal deeds and the actions being taken for its demise. Mr. Bathily portayed the situation prevailing in the Central African Republic as a ray of hope with the completion of the Bangui Forum, which the country's broad political spectrum joined for the first time in many years. According to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the efforts of regional and international mediators have been instrumental in laying the ground for the gradual solution of the crisis, with a fundamental benchmark in the holding of elections in October 2015.

Still in the Central African region, the situation in Burundi has become a source of great concern to the Security Council. The holding of elections and its consequences in and around Burundi, as well as the stance adopted by regional stakeholders, has had a great impact in the proceedings of the Security Council during the month, with divisions surfacing among Council members on how to best to assist Burundi. However, great concerns remain, and the situation in Burundi will surely be at the centre of the Council's agenda for the next month, we hope, and not for the worst reasons.

Tangible progress seems to be occurring in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. It is our expectation that both countries are on the right track towards lasting peace. Darfur remains very problematic, with little or no progress at all towards the establishment of a more peaceful environment. In Côte d'Ivoire, a volatile situation seems to be emerging, and the Security Council adopted resolution 2226 (2015) extending the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire mandate in preparation for the Mission's drawdown if, as we hope, the elections to be held in October are successful and the security situation has stabilized. The resolution transmits some sense of optimism that things in Côte

d'Ivoire might work out and the country may enter a phase of sustained peace and stability.

Concerning Mali, the Council took stock of recent developments with the signing of the peace agreement by all parties. The resolution adopted by the Council, extending the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, entrusts the Mission with fundamental tasks, inter alia, to deploy efforts to ensure the implementation of the peace agreement, the monitoring of the ceasefire and support for the return of the State authority to the north of the country. Now it is high time to mobilize all efforts in order to make things succeed in Mali.

Darfur was a most complex and divisive issue during the work of the month. The adoption of a resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur was quite an achievement in such a divisive atmosphere, especially taking into account the exit strategy established for the Mission, as strongly requested by the Sudanese authorities and its linkage to a set of benchmarks to be met. Most likely, Darfur will remain a fixed item in the Council's work for some time despite the bold desire to end the mission in Darfur.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, chaired by Angola, held a meeting during the month of June related to the electorial processes in various African countries during the biennium. The meeting included the Special Representatives in West and Central Africa, who attended via video teleconference and briefed members on country-specific situations related to electoral processes and conflict situations that might arise from them due to the non-compliance of many political actors with the constitutional rules and the election results. Even so, they are considered by international observation teams to be just and fair. The Permanent Observer of the African Union, who also took part in the meeting, outlined the African Union position on the prevention of post-election-related conflicts, and noted the responsibility of every individual State to respect the African Union electoral framework and its constitutional order.

The Council gave extensive consideration to the situation in the Middle East, with particular emphasis on the conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Palestine. However, contrary to the moderate optimism that we assigned to certain evolving situations in Africa, no solutions to these conflicts are in sight. On the contrary, the Middle East conflicts seem to lead to an abyss. The growing terrorist threat in the region constitutes an extremely dangerous development, with evil contours that only a wise collective effort can contain and eradicate. The Security Council, if it acted in a united manner and really focused in the search for solutions to the most intractable conflicts, could represent this collective effort and embody the wisdom necessary to put an end to bloodshed and to the immense human suffering imposed upon the peoples of the region.

Some of the debates and briefings held during the month were important moment in the Council's work. The debate on children and armed conflict, and the briefings on peacekeeping and peacebuilding and on subsidiary bodies, were relevant contributions to deepening the thematic agenda of the Security Council. In particular, the debate on children and armed conflict (see S/PV.7466), a central theme of the Malaysian presidency, was a remarkable success with the adoption of resolution 2225 (2015), which added abduction to the framework of international law and as a criterion for listing parties in the annex of the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict. In addition, the debate added a dimension to the Working Group's efforts to keep the issue at the forefront of the Security Council's agenda. The briefings on peacekeeping and peacebuilding were important contributions to the debate on the review of peacekeeping and on peacebuilding architecture to which we must add a review of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

We have received a letter from the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group regarding the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General in 2016. As Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, we will try to work with Member States to find ways for the practical implementation of the proposals contained in the ACT letter.

Finally, we would like to refer to the semi-annual briefings by the Chairs of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and related committees at a time when the fight against terrorism has become a real international emergency. Conscious of the danger that terrorism represents, the issue enjoys the unanimous support of Council members, and the meeting reflected that reality (see S/PV.7463).

International criminal justice was part of the monthly agenda with debates on the International

Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court briefed the Council on the issue of Darfur and the case of President Al-Bashir of the Sudan. Also noted was the need to review Council referrals to the Court since the present system undermines the Tribunal's prestige and authority and creates unsolvable problems with stakeholders as distinct as the African Union and the International Criminal Court.

Mr. Fernández-Arias Minuesa (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Malaysian presidency on leadership this month. I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this wrap-up session, which we feel is very appropriate because it also allows us to summarize the Council's work during the first half of 2015. For the delegation of Spain, these six months have been the first of our two-year term in the Council — the fifth time we have participated as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Spain highly appreciates the convening of such meetings for various reasons, which we would like to highlight.

First, as elected members of the Security Council, we understand that we must faithfully comply with our commitment to transparency and collaboration with all States Members of the Organization — a commitment we undertook during our campaign for election. Those elected to the Council, like all members in general, have a responsibility to exercise transparency. We reiterate our readiness to work with the entire membership and with civil society organizations with a view to ensuring that the Security Council continues to grow in efficiency and transparency.

Secondly, wrap-up sessions like today's can be very useful in improving the Council's working methods. Naturally, the effective work of the Council is not just a prior condition for providing an agile response to crises. Efficacy, efficiency and transparency are central elements in reforming the Council's working methods, which is of particular importance to my country. That is why Spain has been working with Angola, Chair of the Ad Hoc Group on Working Methods, to organize an open debate on working methods during the Spanish presidency of the Council in October.

I would like to relate my thoughts on our experience in the first six months on the Council this year, which also leads me to a few considerations on working methods.

One concern is the way in which the penholder system works. Undoubtedly, the quality of the work of the penholders is excellent and allows the Security Council's work to enjoy the necessary continuity and follow-up. However, from the point of view transparency, we believe that there could perhaps be room for improvement. This is an especially important point because unless the information we receive is timely and specific, it is not always possible to participate thoughtfully in the drafting of Council documents, be they resolutions, press releases or presidential statements. That being the case, it may be paradoxical that elected members, serving just two-year terms, have had less time in training than permanent members to participate in negotiations on various resolutions. That is why we feel it would be worthwhile to introduce a system of co-penholders in which one permanent member would always work with one elected non-permanent member.

We also feel that at times there is a lack of proportion between the time taken to explain positions and the time spent actually taking decisions. I know that time is at a premium, but I believe that we need to strike a better balance in the way we manage our time, because it may seem that the time given to debate a matter can extend for hours at the expense of the time we need to take operative decisions, which we often must take within minutes. On more than one occasion, we have experienced hours of discussion and just 10 minutes on the content of a press release.

I also believe that the lack of interaction between Council members and the rest of the membership of the Organization in the open debates is of particular concern. The open debates lose a lot of their meaning in that way because their purpose to provide an opportunity for genuine interaction between members and non-members of the Council on issues that are central to peace and security at any given point in time.

I would now like to mention two matters raised by previous speakers. The selection of the next Secretary-General is one of the most important aspects that we will be dealing with in upcoming months. Transparency must be a central principle, pursuant to Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations. I take this opportunity to encourage greater transparency and inclusiveness in the selection process for the next Secretary-General. Among possible measures is the establishment of a list of candidates and the presentation of candidacies in sufficient time to allow for interaction with Member

States. We also feel that it is essential to bear in mind the need for gender balance in the selection of the next Secretary-General.

Among other matters, we will soon need to consider a revision of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, an issue on which Spain plans to organize a high-level open debate during its Council presidency. The review of resolution 1325 (2000) will be a major priority for us in our two-year term on the Council. I take this opportunity to call for high-level participation in that future debate, to be organized and held in October. I hope that it will add value commensurate with the important goals of that agenda, as the Ambassador of the United Kingdom said just now, while avoiding an excess of rhetoric and a lack of practical implementation.

As noted at the Arria Formula meeting that Spain organized at the end of May with the members of the three panels preparing reports on the peace and security reviews, the review of resolution 1325 (2000) should overlap with the reviews of the peacebuilding architecture and peacekeeping operations, and complement both. We need to take a detailed look at the report of the Independent Panel on Peace Operations. My delegation welcomes the inclusion of a separate section on women and peace and security in the report, where some of the contributions that Spain made in our national capacity would be included.

In conclusion, my delegation appreciates the close and frank cooperation that we have enjoyed with all the members of the Council throughout these months, as well as with the Secretariat and the wonderful interpretation team. We hope to further deepen that cooperation and help to improve the efficiency and transparency of the work of the Council in the year and a half that remains. Finally, I would wish all the best to New Zealand during their presidency of the Council next month.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, and the Malaysian delegation for your leadership this month.

Much of our time this month has been spent addressing security challenges in Africa, and much of that on Burundi. Yesterday, Burundi recklessly moved forward with elections, despite the African Union (AU), the Secretary-General and others urging delay. The risk of mass violence in Burundi remains acute. The elections yesterday were conducted in an environment that was not free, fair or transparent. Those were simply not credible elections.

In the face of real risks of instability and grave violence, instead of allowing space for the opposition to speak, demonstrate and organize, the Government of Burundi has done the reverse, ratcheting up restrictions, locking up opponents, shutting down radio stations, arming youth militias and intimidating those who disagree. They do this as President Nkurunziza continues to seek a third term in office, directly violating commitments undertaken in the Arusha Accords.

The Government of Burundi must restore independent media outlets, release political detainees, condemn violence, ensure credible presidential elections and allow space for political opposition and civil society to function without fear of retribution. We strongly support efforts by the United Nations, the AU, the East African Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to broker a peaceful resolution to this crisis, and we urge the Government to engage in a genuine dialogue with all parties.

The situation in Darfur, of which the Council has been seized for over 10 years, demands our attention and our action. As we struggle to overcome political divisions, the situation in Darfur continues to seriously deteriorate, as the Council recognized in its resolution adopted yesterday, extending the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) for another year. Millions of displaced people still cannot return to their homes. The Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and AU High-level Implementation Panel political processes have stalled. The Government of the Sudan has not indicated that it intends to reinvigorate those processes or stop its unrelenting aerial bombardments and attacks in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. Meanwhile, the Government continues to systematically restrict UNAMID's freedom of movement and access to the extent that a peacekeeper needlessly died last month after the Government shamefully refused to grant a flight clearance for medical evacuation. The Council's attention is needed now more than ever, and so too is UNAMID.

Turning to our discussions on South Sudan, I want to recall UNICEF Director Anthony Lake's 17 June statement on the violations being committed against children in South Sudan, with survivors reporting that boys have been castrated and left to bleed to death

and girls as young as eight years old gang raped and murdered. Children have been tied together, their throats slit. Just today, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan has released a report that people in Upper Nile state have been burned alive. I want to read an excerpt from the report that came out today from our mission in South Sudan that states that a survivor from Koch county narrated to the human rights division how she was dragged out of her tukul and gang raped alongside her neighbour by Government soldiers in front of her 3-year-old child. The soldiers then taunted them that they would appreciate what men from Mayom county were made of. In another instance, a witness from Rubkona county narrated that she saw Government forces gang-raping a lactating mother after tossing her baby aside, while in another case, two witnesses from Nhialdiu narrated how a 17-year-old girl was gang-raped by armed militia who shot her dead. In at least nine separate incidents, women and girls were burnt in tukuls after being gang-raped, particularly in the Boaw village of Koch county.

These reports are a chilling window into the violence against and acute suffering of South Sudan's most vulnerable citizens every day that the parties fail to demonstrate the courage to resolve this conflict, and these most recent reports, in our judgement, merit urgent consideration by the Council. We will work with the incoming presidency to convene the Council in the coming days on them. This crisis is man-made, and those responsible for it must put the well-being of the South Sudanese people ahead of their own narrow political interest. To date, they have refused to do so, and that must change.

In Yemen, we strongly support the efforts of Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed to begin a preliminary dialogue with the Yemeni Government and the Houthi/Saleh-affiliated delegation in Geneva. Geneva could serve as the beginning of a long and — we hope — useful dialogue process. We must not let momentum falter. To this end, all Council members must use their influence with the parties to press them to engage constructively with the United Nations as it builds on the six principles put forward in Geneva. These constitute a promising basis for the United Nations future engagement. A peaceful political transition consistent with the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, the National Dialogue Conference outcomes and relevant Security Council resolutions is the only way out of the current crisis. All parties must show greater willingness to compromise than they have done to date.

We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation and fully support the United Nations call for a new humanitarian pause. For a new pause to be possible, all sides must be prepared to concretely implement the pause and be bound by its terms. Resuming commercial imports is a humanitarian concern of the utmost importance.

Yesterday, we met to discuss the grave crisis in Syria. We said it before, and it bears repeating, that no solution to the Syrian conflict can be imposed by force. An inclusive political settlement towards a peaceful transition is the only way to end the conflict, which has killed more than 220,000 people, injured more than 1 million, driven almost 4 million out of the country as refugees, internally displaced 7.6 million people and left 12.2 million others in need of humanitarian aid, including 5.6 million children. We should not allow this to continue.

This month, we also continued the important tradition of hearing from Force Commanders on the front lines of United Nations peacekeeping operations. I would like to emphasize again our appreciation for their service and our gratitude to all troop contributors who are bravely serving in peacekeeping missions around the world. The meeting two weeks ago (see S/PV.7462) allowed us to discuss several essential aspects of modern peacekeeping, the imperative of appropriate training, the importance of expanding the pool of troop-contributing countries and the kinds of contributions they make, and the critical question of how the system handles exceptions to the rules of engagement. For the peacekeepers putting their lives on the line for the benefit of humanity, we have a responsibility to get the system right.

On a related note, President Obama will host a peacekeeping summit during the General Assembly's high-level week, as many members know. Our goal for the summit will be to step up cooperation among the United Nations, troop-contributing countries and financial supporters of peacekeeping to ensure that the United Nations can draw on the right resources to help our peacekeeping operations succeed — that is, to make them more responsive, better at protecting civilians and more able to fulfil the mandates that we as Member States call on them and need them to fulfil.

Speaking of fulfilling mandates, I would like to thank the Malaysian delegation for its successful and steady leadership of the Security Council in June. Our colleagues from New Zealand can rely on our support for what promises to be a busy July.

Mr. Omaish (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation, Mr. President, for the way in which you have conducted the work of the Council during the month of June, during which there were several events of note and the adoption of several important resolutions and decisions. My congratulations also go to the team assisting you, who have contributed to the success of the Council's work this month.

I take this opportunity to welcome the Malaysian initiative of holding an open debate on the protection of children in conflict situations (see S/PV.7466), given the scarcely credible increase in the number of crimes and violations against children in armed conflicts, in particular in the Middle East and Africa. In that regard, I note the rise in the number of civilian victims, particularly children, resulting from arbitrary bombardments in Syria, and the Syrian regime's use of barrel bombs, especially in populated areas and against hospitals, schools and basic infrastructure. We also reaffirm the need for the parties to the Syrian conflict to cease their violations of international law and to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council. The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, needs international support to reach a solution on Syria that complies with the First Geneva Convention.

The information provided regarding peacekeeping operations has clarified what such operations have been doing in recent years to address the threat posed by non-State groups and their effects. It has also been established that there is a correlation between armed conflict, organized crime and terrorism. Jordan reaffirms that it will continue to contribute effectively to peacekeeping operations in support of the efforts of the United Nations and the international community as a whole to achieve objectives of such operations.

I would also like to express our appreciation for the briefing on post-conflict peacebuilding (see S/PV.7472), which gave us an overview of progress in that area. It was established that the United Nations working procedures related to peacebuilding must be improved and modernized, and that peacekeeping operations need adequate financial and human resources. In that regard, we welcome the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. Lastly, I congratulate the delegation of New Zealand on its forthcoming presidency and wish it every success next month.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): Let me too begin by congratulating the representative of Malaysia on his presidency and his hard-working team on their effectiveness this month. My team was so keen that I should offer my personal reflections that they declined to give me formal remarks for this debate, so I am going to see how I go. I want to offer some reflections on the substance of what we have achieved this month and also on the way in which we achieved it, or failed to achieve it.

We have had some very good debates and a very good outcome in relation to children and armed conflict (see S/PV.7466), and I want to commend Malaysia for making a very substantial contribution to international lawmaking in that area. I thought that the discussion on peacebuilding was also very interesting and, once again, exposed some of the areas into which we must be prepared to go if we are to make best use of the peacebuilding machinery beyond the Council.

We also had good results in relation to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (see S/PV.7468) and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (see S/PV.7478), even though there were some rather deep-seated differences among delegations regarding whether those mandates needed to be adjusted. I welcome the fact that we managed to overcome those differences and adopt the mandates as a united Council. I hope, as I said yesterday, that the new mandate of UNAMID will, in particular, provide an opportunity for a better relationship between the Government of the Sudan and the Council.

If we look beyond the formal outcomes that we achieved this month, however, to consider the problems of the world, we must acknowledge that we have not done all that well. In Syria, Yemen and Libya, we have real problems. There are peace talks fitfully under way in Libya and perhaps under way in Yemen, and nothing at all in Syria. We have real problems in Burundi, where the difficulty of genuinely engaging in prevention is being demonstrated. If the other party does not want to talk, it is very difficult to be an engaged participant. That is a real difficulty, and we have just heard some graphically horrible statistics about what is happening in South Sudan. Those situations reflect very badly on

all of us, not only the members of the Council but the international community as a whole.

There are some problems for which, I think, the Council can properly take responsibility, but we must also admit that there are limits to what it can do. Its members have few arrows in their quiver, particularly if other countries are not prepared to put their troops on the line or authorize more aggressive use of force. Even if they were prepared to do so, we know how difficult such outcomes are to achieve. I do not, therefore, mean to say that the problems are all the Council's; they are not. Particularly in the case of Syria, however, we have a real problem, because the Council is divided, and similar divisions are in evidence in relation to Yemen. Because of such divisions, we cannot really talk to each other and instead seek to score points, which is not helpful.

Some comments have already been made on the way in which we go about our business, and I want to fully endorse what the Ambassador of the United Kingdom said about the need to engage more informally with each other. After all, our consultations are intended to be informal, and yet we have managed to build up a cadre of practice that is so self-denying that it is hard to believe at times what one can and cannot talk about, and the way in which one can talk about it.

I also agree with the delegation of Spain that we need to think about penholding and the ways in which resolutions are negotiated. One option might be the co-penholder proposal, but I would at least ask the permanent members to imagine the impression given to the non-permanent members when a draft resolution is submitted by one of the permanent members to the other permanent members first, and only then to the non-permanent members, when it is to be put to a vote in a day or two. That is not exactly the most useful form of engagement.

I also think that we as Ambassadors have a responsibility to engage more in the products that are negotiated and adopted by this Council. While we of course recognize the great work done by experts and political coordinators, we are ultimately responsible for such products. Yet how often do we really talk about them? How often to we actually have a conversation as ambassadors about what we are doing? I believe that we need to do that, to reach out and suggest that we bring a given matter to the room and talk about it as a group.

Those are sneak previews of what I would like to explore next month when I am President. I do not know how I will get on, but I do hope that you will help me.

Mrs. Alingue (Chad) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your leadership of the Council during your presidency, and the whole of the team that has supported you. I would also thank you for organizing this monthly meeting to assess the Security Council's work in accordance with note S/2010/507 of the President of Council. We believe that such meetings remain the only means of ensuring transparency in relation to non-members and allowing them to follow our work. The assessment meetings at the end of each presidency make it possible to systematically review the Council's work and give us an overview of the priorities reflected in the media.

We remain concerned by the lack of consensus in the Council regarding extremely serious situations that threaten international peace and security, namely, those in Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, Yemen and Libya, as well as other threats, such as terrorism, violent extremism and the spread and circulation of light weapons, illicit trafficking and migration issues. We believe that Council members can do better by listening to each other and by taking into account each other's legitimate concerns in a spirit of consensus.

The adoption of resolution 2220 (2015) on the strengthening of cooperation to counter the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, adopted with nine votes in favour and six abstentions, reveals the power play within the Council and the position of some member States with regard to the others.

Concerning the political crisis in Burundi, we underscore the necessity for the international community to take action to help Burundi overcome the political crisis it is experiencing. We also note the primary role of the West African community in settling the crisis and call for close cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, so as to support regional efforts for an exit from the crisis in the interest of the Burundian people.

During the month of June, the Security Council examined ways to make peacekeeping operations more effective, to protect civilians and to guarantee the security of mission staff. The need to guarantee the security of the Blue Helmets themselves was underscored with concern by force commanders and by delegations, who talked about, for example, the

planting of mines and improvised explosive devices by armed groups in Mali. We think that appropriate means should be made available to United Nations forces to allow them to protect themselves.

With regard to the restrictions imposed by some countries on the ways in which their troops can be used, we think there is a need to have a single chain of command within military and police contingents and to uphold the hierarchy of which they are a part, without giving priority to the orders of national authorities.

With regard to sexual abuse during United Nations missions, which has been unanimously and strongly denounced by all delegations, we believe that the zero-tolerance policy must be made a reality. In that connection, we endorse the proposal to include more women staff in peacekeeping operations, including in high-ranking posts.

With regard to violence against children in armed conflict, our country agrees with the Secretary-General's recommendation, namely, that the Council should ensure that grave violations perpetrated against children be considered crimes subject to Security Council sanctions. We encourage States and financial partners to shore up actions to reintegrate former child soldiers and prevent their recruitment into armed forces. Chad welcomes the fact that it was de-listed from the list of States with children in their armies. Of course, we stand ready to share our modest experience in that area with interested parties.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate once again my congratulations to the President and the whole Malaysian team for the significant work undertaken, the relevance of the topics addressed and the perseverance they demonstrated throughout their presidency. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate New Zealand ahead of time on its assumption of the presidency in July and wish it every success. The delegation of New Zealand can count on Chad's support.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this wrap-up session. June has indeed been a busy month for the Council with various country situations and thematic issues on its programme of work. We would like to focus our comments today on the briefing on peacekeeping operations (S/PV.7464), the briefing on peacebuilding (S/PV.7472) and the Security Council press statements issued during the month.

The briefing on peacekeeping operations once again presented the Council with an opportunity to hear directly from and interact with force commanders. The three themes of the briefing, which were operating in an asymmetric environment, the protection of civilians and how caveats affect performance, highlight some of the key contemporary challenges faced by peacekeeping operations. We are pleased to note that, despite those challenges, peacekeeping missions continue to play a vital role in the maintenance of international peace and security. We pay tribute to the men and women serving in those missions and we offer our deepest condolences to the loved ones of the peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

The briefing on peacebuilding underscored the value of maintaining a close engagement between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Nigeria is of the view that, for peacebuilding to be effective, sustained attention must be paid to institution-building; security-sector reform; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and the strengthening of the rule of law. Also important are the promotion of national dialogue and reconciliation. We must note the interdependence of those thematic issues. They underline the imperative for sustained commitment in addressing the multifaceted challenges of assisting countries transitioning from conflict to peace.

The Nigerian delegation pays tribute to Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil for his achievements as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). We also offer our strong support to the current PBC Chair, Ambassador Olof Skoog of Sweden, and welcome his commitment to making the biggest possible difference in the countries that the Commission is working with. We are confident that, under his able leadership, the PBC will continue to play a vital role in promoting sustainable peace and development in those countries.

The timely issuance of press statements is an important aspect of the Council's work. They allow the Council to respond publicly to significant developments on matters on its agenda. In June, the Council adopted a significant number of press statements, mainly on terrorist attacks, but also on other matters of importance to peace and security, especially at the regional level. Nigeria commends Council members for their flexibility, which has allowed us to reach early consensus on those statements. It is important that the voice of the Council be heard in a timely manner when

the situation so demands. That sends an important message of unity and common purpose among Council members.

Finally, Nigeria congratulates you, Mr. President, and your delegation for the able manner in which you have presided over the affairs of the Council in the month of June. We also seize this opportunity to assure the delegation of New Zealand of our full support as they prepare to assume the presidency of the Council in July.

Mr. Méndez Graterol (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Venezuela congratulates you, Mr. President, and your team on your initiative, efficiency and leadership in guiding the work of the Security Council during the month of June. Great contributions have been made during this past month to the management of the Council.

Our country welcomes this wrap-up session because we believe that these sessions make it possible to identify the progress and challenges before us in the complex task of strengthening international peace and security. In the context of the spirit and purpose of the Charter of the United Nations, we encourage the Security Council to deepen its working relationship with the other Members of the Organization in a transparent and inclusive way with a view to strengthening its credibility in the eyes of the entire membership of that forum.

The issue of children in armed conflict has attracted the Council's attention, and your presidency resolutely promoted consideration of that topic. Venezuela believes the adoption of resolution 2225 (2015) was extremely important. It requested the Secretary-General to include, in the annexes to his reports on the issue, parties that resort to kidnapping children in situations of armed conflict and it calls on them to cease unlawful or arbitrary detention, as well as torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, imposed on children during their detention.

In the context of that important debate on 18 June (see S/PV.7466), in particular with regard to the case of Palestine, a significant number of countries, including Venezuela, expressed their concern and rejected the inconsistency and selectivity shown in the treatment of the occupying Power, which had committed serious violations against Palestinian children, in the annexes to the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/409).

In the work that was done this past month, we would like to highlight the importance of the informational meeting (see S/PV.7464), held on 17 June, with the force commanders of the peacekeeping operations in Darfur, Mali and in separation zone in the Golan Heights. Those exchanges led to agreement on the need to ensure that peacekeeping troops are provided with adequate training, equipment and resources, as well as to ensure that they are determined and willing to fulfil their mandates, regardless of the circumstances in which they operate. Such issues will continue to fuel our discussions in the next few months.

We would also like to mention the informative meeting held with the current Chair and the former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassadors Olof Skoog and Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, on the Commission's eighth session (see S/PV.7472). Some of the most relevant subjects discussed were the importance of including regional and subregional organizations and neighbouring countries in the peacebuilding process; the fundamental role that the Commission plays in tying together the goals of stability, political legitimacy, the rule of law and socioeconomic development; and the need to obtain additional resources for the tasks involved in peacebuilding. In that regard, we would like to highlight the challenge of continuing to provide long-term sustained support to post-conflict countries. The cost of any effort aimed at strengthening such countries' institutional, technical, economic and social capabilities pales in comparison to the human and economic costs that relapses into conflict can bring. Those issues have paved the way for the necessary informed discussion of the reports of bodies studying peace operations, peacebuilding and the achievements of resolution 1325 (2005). Those meetings have served as a prelude to what will surely be an intense debate on the future of some of the Council's fundamental tools for promoting and maintaining international peace and security.

During the Security Council's intensive work over the past six months, the fight against terrorism has been high on its agenda, and those efforts have led to decisions with a global reach aimed at effectively combating that scourge. Resolution 2199 (2015) and the presidential statement on foreign terrorist fighters (S/PRST/2015/11) reinforce the legal and political multilateral framework needed to prevent, combat and eliminate international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The implementation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on that topic

requires a strong commitment on the part of States to ending arms transfers and the financing and training of non-State actors, in accordance with international law. We also appreciate the activities aimed at strengthening international cooperation in our shared effort to combat violent extremism, which have been scheduled for the coming months.

Beyond that, and regarding conflict situations that remain unresolved, with negative consequences for the peoples involved, such as in Palestine and Western Sahara, among others, we call on the Security Council, based on its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations, to take a more active role in promoting peaceful negotiated solutions, with the full cooperation of the parties concerned, in order to achieve firm and lasting peace.

Venezuela attaches particular importance to improving the Security Council's methods of work, which is vital if we are to promote transparency and inclusiveness. In that regard, we believe that the process of selecting and nominating the next Secretary-General, which will start in the next few months, should be guided by those principles, so as to encourage Member States to propose candidates. The official presentation of candidacies for the post of Secretary-General should be done far in enough in advance to ensure better interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council. We appreciate the initiatives and statements that have been made on the matter by various groups of States, including the Non-Aligned Movement, whose position we fully share.

Strengthening the Security Council's relationship with troop-contributing countries is a crucial point on its agenda. We therefore believe it essential that we fully apply Article 44 of the Charter in order to ensure that countries that provide contingents can participate in every aspect and at every stage of United Nations peacekeeping operations, with the goal of achieving more effective coordination between the actors involved in the missions' institutional dynamics.

We would like to encourage the Council to intensify its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, with a view to helping to find solutions to regional conflicts that have an impact on international peace and security. Despite the importance of that objective, we regret that the African Union's Special Envoy on the question of Western Sahara, former President Joaquim Chissano, was not permitted to take part in the discussions on the subject held in April (see S/PV.7435). The fact that the African Union is a strategic ally of the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, in the promotion of peace and stability in Africa was not taken into consideration. That situation affects this body's working methods, including its transparency, and in the future such practices should therefore be avoided.

Turning to another issue, Venezuela believes that the Security Council should confine its focus to dealing with matters that affect international peace and security, in strict accordance with the Charter, and avoid putting issues that are beyond its purview on its agenda. That is necessary in order to ensure that the Council's attention is not distracted from the issues that are central to its work.

Finally, we would like to express our support for and desire to cooperate with the delegation of New Zealand when it takes over the presidency of the Council for the month of July, for which we wish it every success.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council's agenda over the past month has been extremely busy, Mr. President, and we would like to thank your delegation for presiding so capably over its functions.

I would like to focus on various important subjects. The central event of the Malaysian presidency was its convening of a meeting on the topic of children and armed conflict (see S/PV.7466). We share the concern of others about the terrible plight of millions of children living amid armed conflict in various parts of the world. The new trend of violence against children perpetrated by terrorist organizations and groups professing ideologies of violent extremism is particularly worrying.

We also welcomed the meeting on 17 June on peacekeeping issues (see S/PV.7464) in which the force commanders of a number of field missions participated. Such dialogue is especially important in view of the new challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping operations today. One of the most dangerous current trends is the growing number of non-traditional security risks to peacekeepers created by non-State actors. It is also essential that we establish constructive cooperation between United Nations missions and host Governments, which, by definition, are directly responsible for the protection of their populations and the overall situation in their countries.

The relevance of the questions that came up during that meeting was confirmed in the Security Council's discussion of a number of the topics relating to countries in Africa that have traditionally been a focus of the Council's work. The unanimous adoption of resolution 2228 (2015) reaffirmed the role of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur as a solid basis for a settlement in the region. The Council again clearly expressed its support for the head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to act as a mediator between the Government of the Sudan and the Darfur rebels on the basis of the Doha Document. The parties that have influence on the Darfur rebels must urge them to become involved in the Doha peace process as soon as possible. The Council also affirmed the key role of the Joint Working Group consisting of representatives of the Sudan, the United Nations and the African Union in developing an exit strategy for UNAMID's withdrawal from Darfur. The Council and the United Nations Secretariat should study the Group's recommendations very carefully.

On 20 June in Bamako, the complex process of producing a comprehensive settlement for Mali was concluded with the completion of the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. It has opened the way for an end to the armed conflict and to achieving a broad national consensus.

It is our hope that all of the political forces in Mali will shoulder their responsibilities in implementing the provisions of the agreement and continue the peace process dialogue. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali should play an important role in that regard, as enshrined in resolution 2227 (2015) adopted yesterday. The international community should help to strengthen progress; in that connection, we believe that the threat of sanctions would be counter-productive.

The situation in Burundi has remained a focus of the Council's attention, in which context presidential statement S/PRST/2015/13 was adopted. Of utmost importance is an appeal to conduct inclusive internal Burundian dialogue on the organization of elections, based on the country's Constitution. It is our view that further postponement of the electoral timetable could give rise to a constitutional vacuum and increased chaos in Burundi.

We welcome the steps taken by the Government to bring stability to the country by way of implementing the decisions of the African Union and the East African Community, including by providing security guarantees to all political leaders in the electoral period and measures for the disarming of the population. Those who have influence on the opponents to the Government, who have continued to exacerbate the situation in the hope of sinking the elections, must act to stop them from continuing and from spurring the anti-Government forces towards new illegal actions.

In June the Council continued to actively address the issue of the Middle East and North Africa. The situation in the region was marked by high volatility and stabilizing it will be impossible without achieving a political and diplomatic solution to the regional crises. Given the new crises and those that have been going on for several decades, it is unfortunate that there appears to be no reason for optimism regarding a settlement to the crisis in the Middle East.

As a result of outside intervention in the conflict in Syria and actions by the armed opposition, a new threat has arisen, namely, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). It is taking hold in neighbouring Iraq and planting roots in Lebanon and other countries of the region, and beyond. United Nations peacekeepers now find themselves under threat as a result. We strongly condemn the incidents that have resulted in the wounding of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force peacekeepers. Today, ISIL is strengthening its foothold in Afghanistan. It is also targeting Central Asia. In Europe, terrorism has also appeared, as can been seen from events directly tied to that armed group.

We are convinced that all countries in the region must now set aside the disagreements that have always existed and probably will remain on various matters. Instead, they must focus all efforts on combating the threat that is shared by all, namely, terrorism. The Syrian Government has an indisputable right to decisively combat terrorism in the country, while upholding relevant international obligations. However, given the scale of the activities of ISIL, Jabhat al-Nusra and their enablers, Syrian efforts alone will not suffice.

It is also important not to lose sight of the terrorist factor in Yemen. There is every reason to believe that Al-Qaida is spreading its influence there, too. We must prevent terrorists from filling the political vacuum and using the possible agreement of the Yemeni sides to their own ends. We must continue to work with the Yemeni parties to urgently start a thoughtful dialogue on ways to halt the conflict and establish effective and representative bodies of power. We understand

the importance of an inclusive Yemeni dialogue and of Yemenis, themselves, defining their own future without outside intervention. Once again, we would like to underscore the need for a speedy declaration in Yemen of humanitarian truces, given the disastrous situation there.

With regard to the situation in Ukraine we wish to state that the meeting of the Contact Group in June, as well as the of sub-working groups on various matters, and the Normandy Four meeting on 23 June have demonstrated that there is no alternative to the Minsk process, and to a full implementation of the package of measures. Likewise, there is no alternative to direct dialogue between Kyiv and Donetsk and Luhansk. I would like to recall that the Minsk II agreement was signed by representatives of both Kyiv and Donbas. Progress in the implementation of the Minsk agreements is still insufficient. Only six months remain till the end of 2015.

It is clear now, not only to us but also to the other members of the Normandy Four, that implementation of the provisions of the package of measures is being hampered, first and foremost, by Kyiv. We stated that, paragraph by paragraph, in the Council meeting of 5 June (see S/PV.7457). I would like to give the Council a blatant example. According to media outlets and statements by the Kyiv Government, active work is under way to amend the Constitution, in violation of the package of measures; Donetsk and Luhansk have been excluded from the process. Furthermore, at the ministerial meeting in Paris, there was a clear understanding of the danger of the activities of certain forces attempting to push the situation towards a military solution.

We call upon those members of the Council that are using any opportunity, including today's meeting, to repeat propaganda statements, to think about their responsibility for the situation in Ukraine. It would be much more productive, instead of blowing hot air, to bring the necessary pressure to bear on Kyiv for swift implementation of the Minsk II agreements.

Regarding the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, we do not clearly understand the link between those matters and the June and July agendas of the Council, as it would seem that the election of the new Secretary-General is set for next year. As a matter of principle, we wish to underscore that we would not support any attempt to rewrite Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations. The existing procedure has been working fine, thus far.

We would like to recall that last time, in 2006, when the election of the Secretary-General was based on a run-off, Mr. Ban Ki-moon was elected three months before the end of Mr. Annan's term. Regarding the proposal to optimize procedures with a view to greater participation in the process on the part of all Member States, all of those ideas require careful study. We cannot forget that our primary task is to elect the most qualified and fitting candidate as Secretary-General.

In conclusion, we would like to wish the New Zealand delegation every success as it assumes the presidency of the Council in July.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the Malaysian presidency for its successful leadership of the Council and for this wrap-up session, which is of imperative importance to the elected members of the Council in promoting transparent working methods for the benefit of all States Members of the United Nations.

Looking back at the past month, we would stress the importance of the open debate on children and armed conflict (S/PV.7466) and the support of members for including kidnapping as an element to trigger the inclusion of perpetrators in the annexes of the reports of the Secretary-General. We appreciate the fact that numerous participants, including Chile, supported the Lucens Guidelines and the Oslo Declaration on protecting schools and universities from military use during armed conflict, in accordance with Council resolution 2143 (2014).

We would also highlight yesterday's meeting on the situation in Darfur (S/PV.7478) and stress that all referrals to the International Criminal Court (ICC), whether past or future, must be accompanied by consistent action on the part of the Council. Putting an end to impunity requires improved cooperation in communications with the ICC and its Prosecutor.

We have mourned numerous deaths this past month, deaths resulting from terrorist attacks. We reiterate that the fight against terrorism must also include a holistic approach so as to address the deep-seated causes and destabilizing factors that serve as a breeding ground for extremism.

We appreciate the various meeting formats, including informal interactive dialogues and meetings

held under the Arria Formula. The interactive informal dialogue with the Peacebuilding Commission (S/PV.7472) enabled us to discuss the complementarity between that body and the Council and to interact directly with the countries concerned and Chairs of the country-specific configurations. We appreciate the promotion of dialogue between the countries concerned and the subsidiary bodies. In that regard, the Chilean Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan held a formal meeting on 19 June this year with South Sudan and neighbouring States in order to promote dialogue aimed at contributing to a greater and better understanding of the challenges facing States, and also at achieving a better implementation of the sanctions established by the Council. Another example is the meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, where, together with some countries from that continent, we were able to play a preventive role, especially with regard to Burundi.

Finally, we are convinced that the wrap-up sessions must be continued and held monthly, particularly given the upcoming priority issues falling under the mandate of the United Nations system, including the mandate of the Council, such as the anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and the process for electing the Secretary-General. In that regard, we hope that the Council will promote openness and transparency over the next few months, in harmony with the progress of that item through the General Assembly.

In conclusion, I extend my best wishes to New Zealand for their upcoming presidency.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to warmly thank Ambassador Dato Ramlan Bin Ibrahim and the entire Malaysian team for all the work accomplished in June. You, Sir, have managed the agenda of a very busy and productive month in New York outstandingly. In particular, I will remember the excellent debate organized on children in armed conflict, marked by the adoption of the important resolution 2225 (2015). We also had significant discussions on peacebuilding, in various formats, both formal and informal.

I would like first to touch upon two African questions. The first, that of Mali, is encouraging; the other, that of Burundi, continues to worry us.

June marked a historic step taken forward for Mali with the signing of the Bamako Peace Agreement by all concerned parties. The Council took note of that in the adoption of resolution 2227 (2015). That important resolution gives the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) a new mandate to support the implementation of the Peace Agreement in all its aspects, in particular security: and to support the cantonment, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants, and the redeployment of Malian armed forces in the north, in the framework of the mechanisms contained in the agreement.

The full and genuine implementation of the Agreement by its signatories will be key to guaranteeing peace and solidifying it. The Council made clear that it will closely follow the implementation of the Agreement and that those who would oppose its implementation will have to bear the consequences. Thus, by giving the Mission the task of supporting the Peace Agreement, the Security Council recalled the first duty of the Blue Helmets in Mali: helping Mali move towards a lasting peace, in support of the Ouagadougou Agreement during the establishment of MINUSMA and in support of the Bamako Agreement now.

While Mali has embarked on a positive momentum, that has not been the case in Burundi, which has entered a tense period since President Nkurunziza's declaration of his candidacy for a third term. In its press release of 13 June, the African Union established a framework for a new dialogue to settle the political crisis in a long-lasting fashion. The press release called, in particular, for the electoral timetable to be agreed upon by the parties. It also set a number of conditions to be met before the holding of elections — such as the reopening of media outlets, the release of those arrested during protests and the disarmament of groups of young people affiliated in particular with political parties.

In several press releases, the international mediation team and the Secretary-General have indicated that they felt that conditions have not been met at this stage for the holding of free, credible, transparent and inclusive elections. They called for a further postponement of elections. That request we know was not accepted by the Government of Burundi, which cited constitutional constraints.

Unilaterally, the Government held communal and legislative elections yesterday, in a tense atmosphere.

The opposition boycotted them. The strict control of dissenting neighbourhoods by the police since the beginning of June has curtailed demonstrations against a third term. The Government seems determined to hold presidential elections on 15 July and Pierre Nkurunziza remains determined to maintain his candidacy. The situation thus remains volatile and unpredictable. With the support of the Council, international mediation is continuing its efforts to find a common ground for presidential elections. We are launching a heartfelt appeal to all parties, in particular the Burundian authorities, to demonstrate a spirit of dialogue and compromise in the country's higher interests.

Those two situations remind us how much the United Nations needs to improve its effectiveness in both prevention and crisis management. Specifically, the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, chaired by José Ramos-Horta, delivered its report to the Secretary-General on 17 June. The report contains around a hundred recommendations of all kinds: doctrinal ones dealing with political processes, the protection of civilians, the use of force, preventive diplomacy, for example; and recommendations on the functioning of peacekeeping operations, i.e. regarding chains of command, the engagement of troop-contributing countries, equipment, training, as well as on the internal organization of the Secretariat, in particular as pertains to strengthening analysis and planning or mainstreaming logistical support.

The report should now give rise to work on the part of the Secretary-General, who will propose an implementation report. That should be coordinated with Member States. The result will be presented at the next General Assembly, and the recommendations, addressed to the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop-contributing countries and all players in the peacekeeping arena, will, once approved, be gradually implemented thereafter. We have high expectations because through peacekeeping missions and their ability to adapt to changing conditions, the image of the United Nations, especially the relevance of the work of our Organization, are at stake.

I will conclude my statement by briefly touching on the Middle East. Consultations this month have once again revealed the need for specific initiatives for a resumption of the peace process. We cannot just limit ourselves to calling upon the parties to resume negotiations. In the light of the tensions and given the prospects of a two-State solution moving further away, France has proposed an international two-track approach.

The priority here is to create an international support group. Minister Fabius called it the "Quartet plus", which would include, in addition to the current members, the permanent members of the Council and some countries in the region and the European Union. Next, we will have to work for the adoption of a resolution with parameters acceptable to all. A resolution will only be meaningful if it is based on consensus and would bring players to the negotiating table again. We will therefore work in New York and in the capitals to move forward on such an approach.

In Syria, the past weeks have seen the deadliest toll since the conflict began. The number of indiscriminate attacks against civilians has reached an all-time high. The regime has stepped up attacks with barrel bombs. At the same time, the Daesh and Jabhat Al-Nusra terrorist groups have continued their onward march and targeted civilians. Those attacks are intolerable and run counter to international humanitarian law and Security Council resolutions. Working with Spain, France has sought to highlight the suffering of civilians and undertake an approach to raise international awareness regarding the gravity of those atrocities. Over the month of July, we will be working with all delegations in the Council to create a course of action that will be effective in combating those indiscriminate attacks.

We have three priorities in Syria: seeking a political solution, protecting civilians and combating terrorism. We are convinced that those priorities are linked and are complementary. As Special Envoy de Mistura has recalled, ultimately, only a political solution will guarantee Syrians stability and security. And there can be no effective response to terrorism if we do not find a solution that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people, while sidestepping chaos. That is a very difficult path, but one that France finds it necessary to promote tirelessly.

We should not forget that this past month was darkened by heinous terrorist attacks hitting several countries, including France and several other members of the Security Council. Our determination to combat the scourges of terrorism and radicalism is total. More than ever, the unity of the Council is necessary to stop the fanatics.

Finally, I would like to thank the Malaysian presidency and wish every success to New Zealand, which can count on our full support.

Mr. Shen Bo (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China wishes to express its appreciation for Malaysia's leadership as Council President for the month of June. I would like to thank you and your team, Mr. President, for your effective work. I believe that under the leadership of the incoming President, New Zealand, our work will also have positive results.

With regard to the discussions this month, China has stated its views, but I will now focus on three issues.

First, the situation in the Middle East at present remains volatile. Peace talks remain the only viable way to achieve reconciliation between Palestine and Israel. We urge Israel and Palestine to adhere to their strategic decision in opting for peace talks. We hope that the new Government in Israel will take credible steps to create favourable conditions for the start of peace talks, which should include stopping the settlement activities, releasing the Palestinian detainees and the full lifting of the blockade on Gaza. The Council should, on that point, assume the necessary responsibilities and take concrete action to promote peace talks. China supports all initiatives and efforts that could help the two sides bridge their differences and resume peace talks as soon as possible. We hope that the international community will enhance coordination and rally all efforts for a restart of peace talks between the two sides and promote an improvement in the situation there. China is willing to enhance its cooperation with the international community and play a greater role in facilitating a solution.

Secondly, with regard to the question of the Sudan and Darfur, we appreciate the efforts of the Sudanese Government to stabilize the situation in Darfur and promote the political process and the economic and social development of the region. The international community should urge all parties in Darfur, especially the rebel forces, to adhere to the agreed political solution and to take part in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, so as to pave the way for a comprehensive and early solution of the question of Darfur and the development and rebuilding of Darfur. China values the work of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in stabilizing the situation and promoting peace talks and the protection of civilians. We support an extension of the UNAMID mandate.

China has consistently stated that United Nations peacekeeping operations should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries concerned, and take their opinions fully into consideration. We should adjust the mandate and scale of peacekeeping operations in the light of the developments and needs on the ground. The Council should, in that regard, pay attention to the request of the Sudanese Government that the United Nations formulate an exit strategy for UNAMID. We welcome and support the establishment of a tripartite working group, composed of the Secretariat, the Sudanese Government and the African Union, and hope that all parties will step up consultations and devise a reasonable proposal for a phased withdrawal of UNAMID that is acceptable to all.

Thirdly, with regard to United Nations peacebuilding, China believes that it should be owned, led and driven by the countries concerned. It should focus on supporting the countries' own institutions, on capacity-building and on addressing the root causes of the conflicts. On the one hand, the United Nations should serve as a platform aimed at further promoting coordination and cooperation in peacebuilding among the parties in the countries concerned and the stakeholders in the international community. We should avoid monopolizing. We must tailor our work plan to the actual needs of the countries concerned, optimize the use of resources and improve the effectiveness of our work. While ensuring the sustained stability and development of those countries, we should also attend to short-term returns that would allow people to enjoy peacebuilding dividends through projects that do not involve huge investments but bring a quick impact. China will continue to play a positive and constructive role in peacebuilding.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

Before adjourning the meeting, I would like, as this is the last scheduled meeting of the Council for the month of June 2015, to express the sincere appreciation of the delegation of Malaysia to the members of the Council, especially my colleagues, the Permanent Representatives, their respective staff and to the secretariat of the Council for all the support they have given us.

I believe this has been a useful wrap-up session. Some of the suggestions on working methods and others will help us not only to address issues in a much more candid and constructive manner during the informal

consultations but also to invest more time in the best way forward. There have been many useful reflections that would improve the work of the Council. I hope that we can agree on a new set of best practices. If we continue to embrace old styles and habits in the way we conduct ourselves, we are run the risk of having to face yet another groundhog day.

Indeed, it has been a busy month and one in which we have rallied to a consensus on several important issues within our purview. We could not have done it alone or without the hard work, support and positive contributions of every delegation and the representatives of the Secretariat as well as the relevant conference service staff.

As we end our presidency, I know that I speak on behalf of the Council in wishing the delegation of New Zealand good luck and a very successful presidency in the month of July. I wish to ensure New Zealand the full support of the Malaysian delegation.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.